



*"Working together
to save lives."*

Threatening Skies

Severe Weather Awareness Week will be March 11–15, 2002

WHAT'S NEW?

- March 12 — statewide tornado drills, both during the day and evening.
- Changes to NWS web sites underway.
- NOAA Weather Radio expansion nears completion.
- Modernized forecast operations at the Pleasant Hill NWS office.

The National Weather Service, the Kansas Division of Emergency Management, and the Missouri State Emergency Management Agency have announced that **March 11 - 15, 2002**, will be **Severe Weather Awareness Week**.

A statewide tornado safety drill will be conducted during the day of **March 12**. The first drill for the seven Kansas counties of Atchison, Doniphan, Leavenworth, Wyandotte, Johnson,



Miami, and Linn will occur at 10:30 a.m., with the Missouri counties following at 1:30 p.m.

An evening drill is planned at 6:30 p.m. on the same date for all counties. Should the weather be threatening on Tuesday, the drill will be post-

poned until Thursday, March 14.

Local warning sirens, NOAA Weather Radio alarms, and the Emergency Alert System will be activated to signal the start of the drill. Actions should be taken as if it were a real emergency.

The drill will test everyone's readiness for a life-threatening severe weather event, such as a tornado. Other severe weather threats that must also be prepared for include: flash flooding, large hail, damaging winds, and lightning. ♦

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From the desk of the MIC

Several changes have taken place at your Pleasant Hill NWS office over the past six months.

The most notable change has been to our staff. Promotions have led

to the addition of several new meteorologists in our office.

The Pleasant Hill staff continues to lead the charge into 21st century forecast operations. Instead of concentrating

*By Lynn P. Maximuk,
Meteorologist-In-Charge*

on traditional text forecasts, meteorologists are focused instead on maintaining a continuous, always current forecast database.

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From the desk of the MIC

(...Continued from page 1)

This forecast database will still be used to produce the information you've seen in the past. It's main benefit is that it opens the door to many other possibilities of delivering forecast information to all NWS customers.

I'm very excited about the new capabilities of the forecast database. Keep an eye on our web

site for our initial efforts to tap this resource. I expect future capabilities to become more apparent later this year.

While on the topic of our Internet site, another exciting change this spring is that all NWS sites are adopting a similar "look-and-feel". This should help those surfing NWS pages.

The common appearance and standard navigation will help you find

weather, water and climate information consistently across the entire NWS.

Our local web site, <http://www.crh.noaa.gov/eax>, has adopted the initial stages of this "look-and-feel". Please feel free to comment on this project, directly to our webmaster from our web site.

Lastly, I want to thank each of you for your work in the past, and into this spring, as we partner together to save lives! ♦

Threatening Skies

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We appreciate your comments and suggestions.

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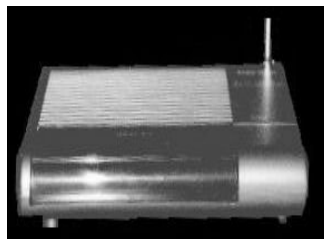
NOAA Weather Radio expansion nears completion

*By Mike Hudson,
Warning Coordination Meteorologist*

Just two short years ago, the NWS office in Pleasant Hill programmed NOAA Weather Radio broadcasts for only two transmitters in west central Missouri. These transmitters reached into 20 counties, centered around the Kansas City and St. Joseph areas.

Thanks to considerable efforts across the state of Missouri, I am pleased to announce that several new NOAA Weather Radio transmitters are on-the-air, broadcasting vital forecast and warning information into many communities across northern into central Missouri.

Where are these new



transmitters? Since early 2000, transmitters have been added at the following locations in Missouri:

- LaPlata
- Lancaster
- Shawnee Mound
- Carrollton
- Galt/Trenton
- Maryville
- Cameron

Details on these new transmitters, including their broadcast frequen-

cies and service areas, can be found at the Pleasant Hill web page. With nine transmitters now servicing our local forecast and warning area, we now reach well into 43 counties!

An additional transmitter in southeast Nebraska will be on-line soon, and will reach into parts of Atchison and Holt counties in Missouri.

When you couple the addition of these transmitters with new voices coming soon, it certainly is an exciting time for NOAA Weather Radio listeners!

♦

How much do you know about severe weather?



Take
our
quiz

1. The most active month for severe thunderstorms in Kansas and Missouri is:
A. August B. May C. October D. March
2. The National Weather Service considers a thunderstorm severe if it produces hail at least _____ inch in diameter, wind of _____ mph or stronger, or a tornado.
A. 2, 80 B. 1, 70 C. 3/4, 58 D. 4, 100
3. The average number of tornadoes per year in Kansas is:
A. 26 B. 50 C. 75 D. 101
4. The average number of tornadoes per year in Missouri is:
A. 26 B. 50 C. 75 D. 101
5. Tornadoes can occur at any time of the day, but the mostly likely time is between:
A. 1 PM and 6 PM B. 5 PM and 10 PM C. 8 AM and 4 PM D. 3 PM and 9 PM
6. The best shelter from a tornado or severe thunderstorm is:
A. a vehicle B. a mobile home C. a basement or strong sturdy shelter
D. under a highway overpass
7. The low pressure with a tornado causes buildings to “explode” as the tornado passes overhead.
A. True B. False
8. Windows should be opened before a tornado approaches to equalize pressure and minimize damage.
A. True B. False
9. The rubber soles of shoes or rubber tires on a car will protect you from being struck by lightning.
A. True B. False
10. If you are on a golf course and hear thunder, your best action is:
A. Quickly play the round and move to the next green.
B. Head for the club house.
C. Ignore the storm and hope it will blow over.
D. Get under a tree to stay dry.
11. During a local youth soccer game, you notice distant lightning flashes and hear low rumbles of the thunder. You should:
A. Head to the concession stand before it gets busy.
B. Get your umbrella ready in case it rains.
C. Bring it to the referees attention, and get in your car or a nearby building.
D. Stand under a tree to keep dry in case it rains.

(Continued on page 4....)

Severe Weather Quiz
 (...Continued from page 3)



12. People struck by lightning carry an electrical charge and should not be touched.
 A. True B. False
13. If you see a flash of lightning and the next clap of thunder is 5 seconds later, how far away is the thunderstorm?
 A. 15 miles B. 10 miles C. 5 miles D. 1 mile
14. Since 1950, the number one cause of death associated with thunderstorms is:
 A. Tornadoes B. Lightning C. Flash floods and floods D. Hail
15. Six inches of fast moving water can knock you off your feet.
 A. True B. False
16. A depth of two feet of water will cause most vehicles to float.
 A. True B. False
17. A downburst wind from a thunderstorm can exceed 100 mph and cause damage equivalent to a strong tornado.
 A. True B. False
18. The feature pictured on the left of this question is best described as what:
 A. Wall cloud B. Shelf cloud C. Scary-looking cloud D. None of these.
19. The phrase “tornado watch” means:
 A. Tornadoes are possible.
 B. Large hail is possible.
 C. Strong and damaging winds are possible.
 D. All of the above are possible.
20. The phrase “tornado warning” means:
 A. Tornadoes are possible, but not imminent.
 B. A tornado has been sighted or indicted by Doppler Radar, take shelter!
 C. Spotters have reported strong thunderstorms in the area.
 D. All of the above.
21. If a flood warning is issued for your area, you should:
 A. Keep alert to rising waters, and evacuate if necessary.
 B. Bring in outdoor furniture or other items that may get lost in high water.
 C. Avoid using your automobile unless it is to evacuate.
 D. Keep tuned in to NOAA Weather Radio or local media for weather information.
 E. All of the above.

**BE PREPARED
 FOR SEVERE
 WEATHER
 SEASON!**

**Answers to our
 Weather Quiz:**

1. B	8. B	16. A
2. C	9. B	17. A
3. B	10. B	18. B
4. A	11. C	19. D
5. D	12. B	20. B
6. C	13. D	21. E
7. B	14. C	
	15. A	

How did you score? ♦

How does your National Weather Service deliver severe weather information?

NWS Terms you should know:

- TORNADO WATCH
- TORNADO WARNING
- SEVERE THUNDERSTORM WATCH
- SEVERE THUNDERSTORM WARNING
- FLOOD WATCH
- FLASH FLOOD WARNING
- FLASH FLOOD STATEMENT
- SEVERE WEATHER STATEMENT
- HAZARDOUS WEATHER OUTLOOK
- SPECIAL WEATHER STATEMENT



The National Weather Service (NWS) uses specific terminology to relay the weather threat to the public in the fastest way possible. In the spring and summer, there are a variety of watches, warnings and statements you need to understand in order to be prepared. Keep these in mind as we enter the 2002 Severe Weather Season:

TORNADO WATCH -

Means that conditions are favorable for tornadoes to develop. It is normally issued for four to six hours, and can include many counties. If you are in or near the Tornado Watch area, stay informed with NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio or television.

TORNADO WARNING -

Means that a tornado has been sighted, or a developing tornado is reported by trained spotters or indicated on Doppler radar. A warning is typically issued for a small area for less than an hour. If a Tornado Warning is issued for your area, take cover immediately!

SEVERE THUNDERSTORM WATCH -

Means that conditions are favorable for thunderstorms to produce large hail or damaging winds. These watches are normally issued for 4 to 6 hours at a time, and for a large number of counties. Once again, if you are

in or near the Severe Thunderstorm Watch area, stay informed with NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio, or television.

SEVERE THUNDERSTORM WARNING -

Means that a severe thunderstorm has been detected by Doppler radar, or by a trained spotter. Severe thunderstorms produce wind gusts to 58 mph or stronger, or hail 3/4 inch in diameter or larger. Take cover quickly if a severe thunderstorm approaches you, or if one is reported in your area.

SEVERE WEATHER STATEMENT -

The Severe Weather Statement is a follow-up to Tornado and Severe Thunderstorm Warnings. These statements inform you of the current status of a tornado or severe thunderstorm. In addition, it gives the history of a storm, where it is moving, and who it will affect. This NWS product is also used to cancel or expire a warning.

FLOOD WATCH -

This is issued when heavy rain may develop and result in flash flooding in or near the watch area. A Flood Watch will also be issued if ground, river/stream conditions, or radar surveillance indicate flash flooding is possible, but not imminent within a designated area.

FLASH FLOOD WARNING -

Means flash flooding has developed or is imminent in

the area. When a Flash Flood Warning is issued, move to higher ground immediately!

FLASH FLOOD STATEMENT -

Flash Flood Statements are used to continue, expire or cancel Flash Flood Warnings. These statements provide additional or current information, and to keep you informed of the flooding status.

SPECIAL WEATHER STATEMENT -

For severe weather purposes, the Special Weather Statement is applied when a Tornado or Severe Thunderstorm Watch is either posted or cancelled. In fact, it can be issued to cancel part of a watch area, or the entire watch area when severe weather is no longer expected.

HAZARDOUS WEATHER OUTLOOK -

A product issued by the NWS to discuss the significant weather of the day, and also over the next seven days. It describes potential weather hazards for an area, and is especially created for trained spotters and Emergency Managers. The Hazardous Weather Outlook will detail the type of severe weather expected (if any), timing, and expected location of the severe weather. ♦



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*StormReady is
 a national
 program that
 encourages
 entities to take
 a proactive
 approach to
 hazardous
 weather
 operations.*
 ”

Many laws and regulations help local emergency managers deal with hazardous spills, fires, search and rescue operations and medical crises, but there are **few guidelines dealing with hazardous weather.**

Recognizing this need, the National Weather Service designed the **Storm-Ready Program** to help cities, counties and towns implement procedures to reduce the potential for disastrous, weather-related consequences.

StormReady is a national program that encourages entities to take a proactive approach to hazardous weather operations by providing a specific

set of criterion and guidelines. The program is voluntary and the advice is population-based, so cities and counties with limited resources can still participate.

To be recognized as StormReady, some of the criteria a county or community must meet include:

- Establishing a 24-hour warning point.
- Have more than one way to receive National Weather Service watches and warnings.
- Be able to warn citizens of critical weather.
- Monitor local weather conditions.
- Develop a hazardous weather plan.
- Promote weather safety and readiness through presentations.

Through a formal application and site visit process, a county or city can be recognized as StormReady.

Since Americans live in the **most severe weather-prone country** on earth, it is highly important that local officials have a weather operations plan in place. StormReady can provide clear-cut advice and recommendations through a partnership with your local National Weather Service in Pleasant Hill, Missouri.

So far, the National Weather Service office in Pleasant Hill has certified 10 jurisdictions in its County Warning Area as Storm-Ready. **ARE YOU INTERESTED?**

Applications and specific details can be obtained from the National Weather Service in Pleasant Hill, or you can also find the application, along with additional information, at: **www.nws.noaa.gov/stormready/**. ♦

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